

From: Doug Armstrong
To: Microsoft ATR
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Subject: Microsoft Settlement

As a professional software developer with over 17 years of experience in the field I feel compelled to express my opinion on the proposed settlement to the Microsoft anti-trust ruling. My livelihood, indeed the future of the entire software and high technology industry, has been and may continue to be directly affected by the behavior of Microsoft should this settlement be approved.

While reading the proposed settlement I was struck by how generous it was to a party which has been found guilty of stifling a very important industry for such a long time. I was also appalled that the victors in this case would agree to terms which encouraged a ruthless monopolist to further its attempts to control each aspect of the software industry, not to mention the Internet.

The company I work for uses Microsoft's office productivity products, despite the well-known security flaws and a history of unreliable operation, simply because the alternatives have been deemed 'too risky' by the corporate IT (Information Technology) department. In explaining what 'too risky' meant, we were told that the IT department was worried that upgrades and support for alternative products might not be available in the future if Microsoft decided to crush the already struggling competition in this arena of software products.

The company I work for also uses Microsoft's software development tools, although not exclusively, and certainly not to develop our own main product. Instead we use their tools to develop test suites to execute within a Windows environment. We have discovered numerous flaws in the tools themselves, and in the compiled code they produce. When we attempted to report this issues to Microsoft's technical support group, we were told that we would have to pay Microsoft for the privilege of helping them find bugs in their own products. No other company in the industry that I am aware of has such an egregiously arrogant attitude toward its customers and developers.

In short, I must convey my strong opposition to the proposed settlement and urge you to continue to work toward achieving a fair and just punishment of Microsoft.

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